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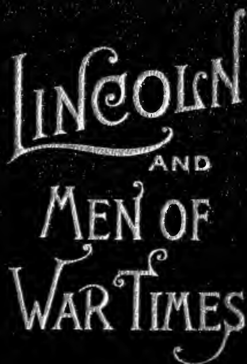
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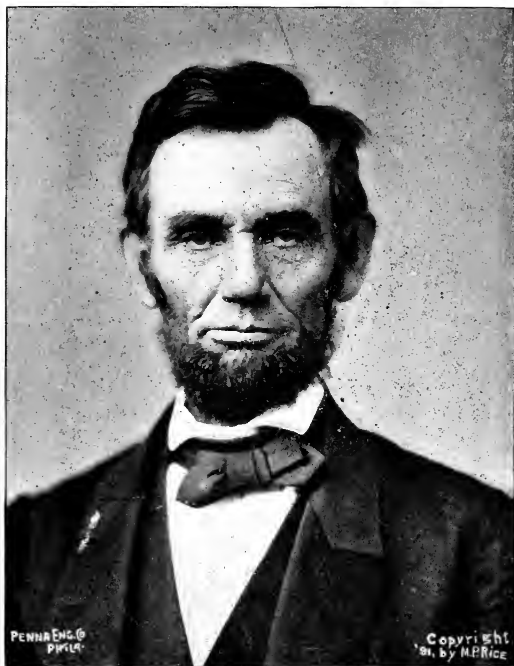

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1864.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

AND

MEN OF WAR-TIMES

SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF WAR AND POLITICS DURING THE LINCOLN ADMINISTRATION

WITH INTRODUCTION BY DR. A. C. LAMBDIN

BY

A. K. McCLURE, LL.D.

PHILADELPHIA
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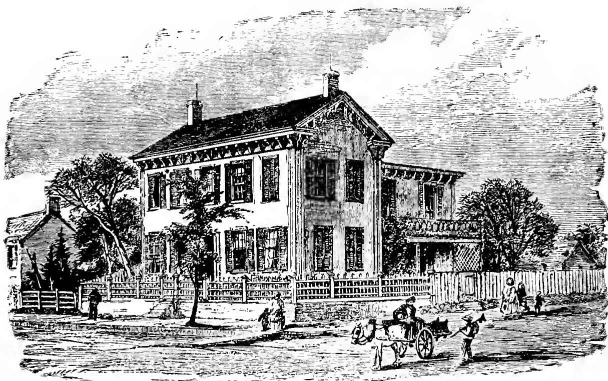
To—

Andrew Gregg Curtin
the Great War
Governor of the
Union: Patriot
Statesman, Friend;
this volume is
affectionately
dedicated

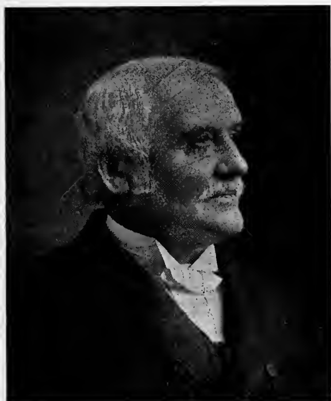
A. K. McClure

LINCOLN'S HOME IN CHILDHOOD.



LINCOLN'S HOME IN SPRINGFIELD.

PREFACE.



THE chapters in this volume make no pretensions to give either a biography of Abraham Lincoln or a history of his memorable Administration. They were written amidst the constant pressure of editorial duties simply to correct some popular errors as to Lincoln's character and actions. So much has been written of him by persons assuming to possess information obtained in the inner circle of his confidence, and such conflicting presentations of his personal attributes and private and public acts have been given to the public, that I have deemed it a duty to contribute what little I could from personal knowledge, to correct some common errors in estimating his character, ability, and efforts.

The closest men to Abraham Lincoln, both before and after his election to the Presidency, were David Davis,

Leonard Swett, Ward H. Lamon, and William H. Herndon. Davis and Swett were his close personal and political counselors; Lamon was his Marshal for Washington and Herndon had been his law-partner for twenty years. These men, who knew Mr. Lincoln better than all others, unite in testifying that his extreme caution prevented him from making a personal confidant of any one; and my own more limited intercourse with him taught me, in the early period of our acquaintance, that those who assumed that they enjoyed Lincoln's confidence had little knowledge of the man. It is the generally honest but mistaken belief of confidential relations with Lincoln on the part of biographers and magazine and newspaper writers that has presented him to the public in such a confusion of attitudes and as possessing such strangely contradictory individual qualities.

I saw Mr. Lincoln many times during his Presidential term, and, like all of the many others who had intimate relations with him, I enjoyed his confidence only within the limitations of the necessities of the occasion. I do not therefore write these chapters assuming to have been the confidant of Mr. Lincoln; but in some things I did see him as he was, and, from necessity, knew what he did and why he did it. What thus happened to come under my own observation and within my own hearing often related to men or measures of moment then and quite as momentous now, when the events of the war are about to be finally crystallized into history.

My personal knowledge of occurrences in which Mr. Lincoln and other great actors in the bloody drama of

our Civil War were directly involved enables me to present some of the chief characteristics of Mr. Lincoln, and to support them by facts and circumstances which are conclusive. I have, therefore, written only of Lincoln and his relations with the prominent chieftains and civilians with whom I had more or less intimate personal acquaintance. The facts herein given relating to leading generals and statesmen are presented to illustrate in the clearest manner possible the dominating characteristics of Mr. Lincoln. They may or may not be accepted by the public as important, but they have the one merit of absolute truthfulness.

Abraham Lincoln achieved more in American statesmanship than any other President, legislator, or diplomat in the history of the Republic; and what he achieved brought no borrowed plumes to his crown. Compelled to meet and solve the most momentous problems of our government, and beset by confused counsels and intensified jealousies, he has written the most lustrous records of American history; and his name and fame must be immortal while liberty shall have worshipers in any land. To aid to a better understanding of this "noblest Roman of them all" is the purpose of these chapters; and if they shall, in the humblest degree, accomplish that end, I shall be more than content.

The portraits in these chapters have been selected with scrupulous care and executed in the best style. The frontispiece portrait of Lincoln is the only perfect copy of his face that I have ever seen in any picture. It was

taken in March, 1864, on the occasion when he handed Grant his commission as lieutenant-general. Two negatives were taken by the artist, and only one of them "touched up" and copies printed therefrom at the time. The other negative remained untouched until a few months ago, when it was discovered and copies printed from it without a single change in the lines or features of Lincoln's face. It therefore presents Lincoln true to life. The other portraits of Lincoln present him as he appeared when he delivered his speech in Cooper Institute, New York, in 1859, with the cleanly-shaven face that was always maintained until after his election to the Presidency, and as he appeared when studying with his son "Tad" at his side. These portraits I have selected because they give the most accurate presentations of the man, and to them are added a correct picture of the humble home of his early childhood; of his Springfield home of 1860; of the tomb in which his dust reposes near Springfield, Ill.; and a fac-simile of his letter of acceptance in 1860.

I am greatly indebted to the Lives of Lincoln given by Nicolay and Hay—the most complete and accurate record of dates and events, military and civil, relating to Lincoln—by Mr. Herndon, by Mr. Lamon, by Mr. Arnold, and by Mr. Brooks, and to Mr. Blaine's "Twenty Years in Congress," for valuable information on many points referred to in these chapters.

A. K. McCLURE.

PHILADELPHIA, 1892.

INTRODUCTION.

THE modern spirit, which is essentially the democratic spirit, that has so profoundly influenced every manifestation of human thought, has wrought a great change in the study of history and in the estimate of historical personages. To the older writers history was mainly a record of the acts of great men—monarchs, ministers, and generals—who rose out of the mist of the past as independent and irresponsible agents; the champions of opposing ideas, it might be, but themselves the centres of all interest, and to be considered and classified as heroes or villains according as one liked or disliked the general purpose of their lives. The modern historian, on the other hand, finds the material for a just estimate of times past not in the lives of the few

as much as in the lives of the many—in the general conditions of civilization, of which the men of distinction are only the strongest exponents, dramatizing in themselves the forces of their age.

Most of all is this recognized concerning periods of storm and stress, of war and tumult. Leaders may hasten or retard events, may direct or misdirect the impulses of the people, but they do not create these impulses. They are governed by them. Whether or not we accept that magnificent generalization of Count Tolstoi in his *Physiology of War* that makes Napoleon and Alexander but cock-boats on the tide, and the private soldier a more genuine power than either of them, the time certainly is past when one could speak of wars or revolutions as the capricious acts of individual men, or could profess to estimate the character and achievements of these men apart from the history of the people that surrounded them.

This does not diminish the admiration due to the heroes of history. If it takes from them that element of the miraculous by which their proportions were distorted, it shows more clearly the means and methods of their achievement, which no longer appears due to the mere accident of birth, position, or opportunity, but rather to the individual qualities by which one man is enabled to assert himself as the representative of the mass. Most of all is this the case in a republic, where these accidents of birth or place, while they give opportunities, confer no privileges; where incapacity may find preferment, but where it must be soon discovered; and

where, in the long run, it is the man who best appreciates and can most highly direct the forces of his time that earns his final place among the great.

It follows that while the history of the individual can be studied only in relation with his surroundings, the history of a nation may be exemplified in that of its representative men. There is no sharp dividing-line between history and biography. As the poet, the painter, the composer must be considered in the light of the poetry, the painting, the music of his period, which he in turn illuminates, so the man of affairs can only be understood if we can see him in his relations with his contemporaries, as he appeared to them and they to him, and as he and they were related to the great popular movements that controlled them all. And these movements, in their turn, may be best understood when we can see them as they were apprehended by the men who had directly to deal with them.

The history of our civil war is yet to be written. A great popular movement and counter-movement, the contest, now seen to have been inevitable, of ideas developed through generations, bearing results more far-reaching than the wisest could foresee and affecting the whole current of the nation's life, requires the perspective of a greater distance in time than we have reached perhaps even yet, for the final view that shall give to every part its just proportion. The soldier in battle sees only that part of the field that is about him; the colonel reports only the movements of his own regiment; the general of his brigade, division, corps; yet from these

various reports the military historian forms his estimate of the campaign. Thus far, our records of the war are mainly in biography, personal narrative, and this for the most part of a controversial character, designed to set forth some one person's view, to vindicate his conduct, to defend the policy of a party. Even the purely military movements from 1861 to 1865 have scarcely yet crystallized in history, and the vastly more important political and social history of that great era is still in controversy.

With the exception of Mr. Blaine's delightful narrative of *Twenty Years in Congress*, the most comprehensive, compact, and philosophic summary that has been made of any like experience, we have nothing relating to this period that approaches to the dignity of history. The *Life of Lincoln* by Nicolay and Hay is an admirable compilation of the political records of the time, and its narrative of public events is invaluable. But as an actual biography of Lincoln it is unsatisfactory, and as a comprehensive view of the great forces for which Lincoln stood it is lacking in proportion as in insight.

For Lincoln is, above all things, the representative of the people whose President he was, the embodiment and exponent of their convictions, their courage, their persistence, their limitations as well as their strength, their homely as well as their heroic attributes. The halo of a martyr's death exalted him, in the eyes of those of us who came after, to the plane of the ideal where we lost sight of the actual man. To know Lincoln as he was we must know him in his actual relations to the tre-

mendous task that devolved upon him, and to all the fluctuations of that public sentiment whose support alone could make the execution of this task possible. To think of him as a specially inspired genius, innocent of the world and holding his triumphant way against all experience by some sort of supernatural insight, is to do needless violence alike to the philosophy of history and to recorded fact.

The chapters upon Lincoln which make up this volume have one supreme value—that they present a convincingly truthful picture of the man as he appeared to an experienced observer who was called at various times into intimate relations with him, and who records only what he personally and directly knew of Lincoln's acts and motives at certain critical and illustrative periods, and of his attitude toward other actors in the same great drama.

A many-sided character like Lincoln's shows itself under various aspects to various men, and Mr. McClure makes it very plain to us that few if any of those who thought they knew Lincoln intimately knew really more than the one side he showed to each of them. Much of Mr. McClure's intercourse with Lincoln had to do, from time to time, with what we now call practical politics, and his extraordinary shrewdness as a politician is one aspect of this many-sided character that has not before been so intelligently set forth. Yet this seems one of the great secrets of Lincoln's success—his ready perception of the popular current, his carefulness in guiding it, and his ability to wait for it if he found himself in

danger of going ahead too fast. No man of his time was more earnest and sincere in his convictions, but he could not afford to risk them in impracticable experiments. He had to achieve results and patiently to await opportunities. The ideal hero of the old-fashioned historian, who must be always heroic, would not have waited. And he would not have achieved. If those to whom these revelations of Lincoln's shrewdness and ingenuity as a practical politician bring something of a shock will only think of the failures that he witnessed, and what failure in his case would have meant, they will not fear that Lincoln's fame will suffer from the truth.

It is perhaps best of all in Mr. Lincoln's relations with his immediate associates and subordinates that we observe those elements of shrewd judgment, of patience, self-repression, persistence, and abiding faith that are such essential parts of his character. His treatment of Grant is a conspicuous illustration not only of his judgment of men, but of that cautious policy that so often enabled him to carry his ends by deferring them. His patient endurance with Stanton, often yielding to him against his own convictions in order to avoid a rupture that would have brought disaster, and indeed his relations with all the leading members of his Cabinet, not less than the curiously characteristic diplomacy that resulted in the nomination of Andrew Johnson, illustrate this same thoughtful prudence that ever subordinated the minor issue to the greater—which is the art of the statesman.

This aspect of Mr. Lincoln's character is dwelt upon here because it is one that has been generally obscured in the popular estimate, but that is absolutely essential to any right estimate of the man and his work. No acts of his administration have been less understood than the great achievement of emancipation and his attitude toward the States in rebellion at the close of the war. On both of these points Mr. McClure speaks with the authority of exact knowledge, and he shows us with how little of self-assertion, with how much of prudent self-repression, Mr. Lincoln approached these as all other great crises of his career. He was not more in advance of his time than others were in foreseeing the inevitable destruction of slavery; but to him the one great purpose of the restoration of the Union was ever paramount, and the other must wait till the exigencies of the war should solve the problem or bring the people, the masses as well as the leaders, to recognize an act of emancipation as a supreme necessity. His own plan of compensated emancipation he brought forward in his Cabinet, and when it was disapproved he folded it up and put it by. And so he watched and waited till the time came when the country called for more heroic measures and he could speak as the mouthpiece of the nation.

Again, at the close of the war he had his own plan, deliberately formed, for the recall of the legislatures of the Southern States to resume their functions under the Constitution. There can be no dispute as to Lincoln's intentions, as expressed in his own directions concerning Virginia, or his communication of these intentions to

General Sherman. But when he found that he was not sustained he withdrew his instructions, to await the turn of events; and before he could recast his plans to make the present yielding lead to future achievement, the assassin's bullet ended his great life. Then all the men who had complained of Lincoln's slowness, his timidity, his indirectness, and who thought it the part of a leader to go ahead, irrespective of whether anybody followed him, had the opportunity they wished to try their various experiments.

We know what confusion and disaster they wrought. The appeal was not, like his, to the conscience and convictions of the people, but to their passions and resentments; and it is only now, when a new generation has come upon the scene, that we are emerging from the shadows of that dreadful time, and are learning to estimate its men and measures justly. And Lincoln rises in our esteem as we see in him not merely an abstract, impossible ideal, nor merely, on the other hand, a rough, unschooled Western politician, but the typical Northern American of his time, the embodiment of the character of the nation in its period of greatest trial.

Such at least is the idea that comes strongly to me from these chapters. Always somewhat skeptical of the untutored genius, as well as of the genius who thinks himself in advance of his age, I confess that I like much better to think of Lincoln as a man schooled for his work by thoughtful study and patient watchfulness, and meeting the strong men who surrounded him as at least their peer, not alone in singleness of devotion to a cause,

but in the art of statesmanship as well. Very many of these strong men Mr. McClure brings before us with the vivid relief of intimate knowledge, and the reader will not fail to recognize the just appreciation with which each one of these great figures is presented. This seems to me another of the qualities that give to this volume a value that is new. While its point of view is that of personal knowledge, it is also that of the impartial student, in whose mind the controversies of a quarter of a century have clarified and confirmed the judgments of the historian. He has given us thus not only a series of illustrative episodes, but a well-proportioned group of figures representing truthfully the political forces of the period of the war, with the one great figure always in the centre—the great President, and more than that, the great American, the embodiment of the strength and uprightness, the conscience and the courage, of American manhood, the realization of our democratic ideal.

ALFRED COCHRAN LAMBDIN.

THE TIMES OFFICE,
April, 1892.

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Springfield, Ills. May 23. 1860

Hon: George Ashmun.

President of the Republican National Convention.

Sir:

I accept the nomination tendered me by the Convention over which you presided, and of which I am formally apprized in the letter of yourself and others, acting as a Committee of the Convention, for that purpose.

The declaration of principles and sentiments, which accompanies your letter, meets my approval; and it shall be my care not to violate, or disregard it, in any part.

Imploring the assistance of Divine Providence, and with due regard to the views and feelings of all who were represented in the Convention; to the rights of all the states, and territories, and people of the nation; to the inviolability of the Constitution, and the perpetual union, harmony, and prosperity of all, I am most happy to co-operate for the practical success of the principles declared by the Convention.

Your obliged friend, and fellow citizen

A. Lincoln

FAC-SIMILE OF LINCOLN'S LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE.

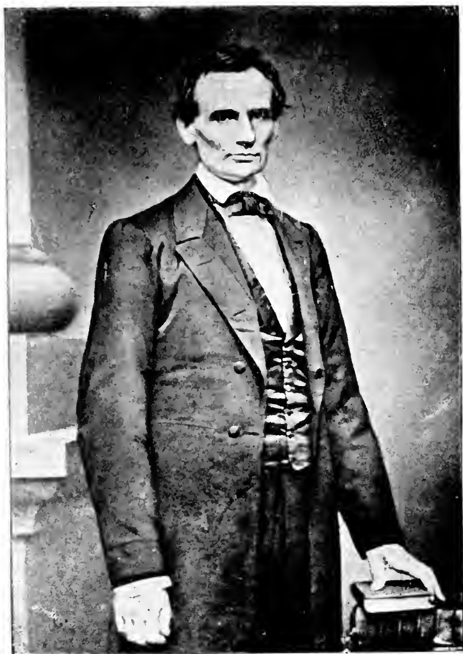
[Copied from "Abraham Lincoln; A History," by permission of its authors.]

LINCOLN IN 1860.

IT was the unexpected that happened in Chicago on that fateful 18th of May, 1860, when Abraham Lincoln was nominated for President of the United States. It was wholly unexpected by the friends of Seward; it was hoped for, but not confidently expected, by the friends of Lincoln. The convention was the ablest assembly of the kind ever called together in this country. It was the first national deliberative body of the Republican party that was to attain such illustrious achievements in the history of free government. The first national convention of that party, held in Philadelphia in 1856, was composed of a loose aggregation of political free-thinkers, embracing many usually denominated as "cranks." The party was without organization or cohesion; its delegates were self-appointed and responsible to no regular constituency. It was the sudden eruption of the intense resentment of the people of the North against the encroachments of slavery in Northern Territories, and neither in the character of its leaders nor in the record of its proceedings did it rank as a distinctively deliberative body. It nominated a romantic adventurer for President—a man untried in statesmanship and who had done little to commend him to the considerate judgment of the nation as its Chief Magistrate in a period of uncom-

mon peril. The campaign that followed was one of unusual brilliancy, and resulted in anchoring nearly all of the old Democratic States of the West in the Republican column. In 1860 the principles of the Republican party had been clearly defined; its organization had been perfected in every Northern State, and each delegate to that convention at Chicago was regularly chosen and represented a great party inspired by a devotion to its faith that has seldom been equaled and never surpassed in all our political history. The halo of romance that encircled General Fremont, "the Pathfinder," four years before had perished, and he was unthought of as a candidate.

For nearly two years before the meeting of the Chicago Convention in 1860 the Republican party had one pre-eminent leader who was recognized as the coming candidate for President. The one man who had done most to inspire and crystallize the Republican organization was William H. Seward of New York. Certainly, two-thirds of the delegates chosen to the convention preferred him for President, and a decided majority went to Chicago expecting to vote for his nomination. Had the convention been held in any other place than Chicago, it is quite probable that Seward would have been successful; but every circumstance seemed to converge to his defeat when the delegates came face to face in Chicago to solve the problem of a Republican national victory. Of the 231 men who voted for Lincoln on the third and last ballot, not less than 100 of them voted reluctantly against the candidate of their choice. It was a Republican-Seward convention; it was not a Seward-Republican convention. With all its devotion to Seward it yielded to a higher devotion to Republican success, and that led to the nomination of Abraham Lincoln.



(Photo by Brady, Washington.)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1859.

A VISIT TO LINCOLN.

I NEVER met Abraham Lincoln until early in January, 1861, some two months after his election to the Presidency. I had been brought into very close and confidential relations with him by correspondence during the Pennsylvania campaign of 1860. His letters were frequent, and always eminently practical, on the then supreme question of electing the Republican State ticket in October. It was believed on all sides that unless Pennsylvania could be carried in October, Lincoln's defeat would be certain in November. Pennsylvania was thus accepted as the key to Republican success, and Lincoln naturally watched the struggle with intense interest. In accordance with his repeated solicitations, he was advised from the headquarters of the State Committee, of which I was chairman, of all the varied phases of the struggle. It soon became evident from his inquiries and versatile suggestions that he took nothing for granted. He had to win the preliminary battle in October, and he left nothing undone within his power to ascertain the exact situation and to understand every peril involved in it.

The Republican party in Pennsylvania, although then but freshly organized, had many different elements and bitter factional feuds within its own household, and all who actively participated in party efforts were more or less involved in them. I did not entirely escape the bit-

terness that was displayed in many quarters. Had I been simply a private in the ranks, it would have been of little consequence to Lincoln whether I was competent to conduct so important a campaign or not; but when he was advised, not only from within the State, but from friends outside the State as well, that the party organization in Pennsylvania was not equal to the pressing necessities of the occasion, he adopted his own characteristic methods to satisfy himself on the subject.

I had met David Davis and Leonard Swett for the first time at the Chicago Convention, and of course we knew little of each other personally. Some time toward midsummer, when the campaign in Pennsylvania was well under way, Davis and Swett entered my headquarters together and handed me a letter from Lincoln, in which he said that these gentlemen were greatly interested in his election—that they were on East looking into the contest generally, and he would be pleased if I would furnish them every facility to ascertain the condition of affairs in the State. I was very glad to do so, and they spent two days at my headquarters, where every information was given them and the methods and progress of the organization opened to them without reserve. They saw that for the first time in the history of Pennsylvania politics the new party had been organized by the State Committee in every election district of the State, and that everything that could be done had been done to put the party in condition for a successful battle.

After Davis and Swett had finished their work and notified me of their purpose to leave during the night, they invited me to a private dinner at which none were present but ourselves. During the course of the dinner Swett informed me that they were very happy now to be able to tell me the real purpose of their mission—that had their information been less satisfactory they would

(Photo by Brady, Washington.)

LIEUT.-GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT, 1861.

LINCOLN'S SORE TRIALS.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN arrived in Washington on the 23d of February, 1861, to accept the most appalling responsibilities ever cast upon any civil ruler of modern times. If he could have commanded the hearty confidence and co-operation of the leaders of his own party, his task would have been greatly lessened, but it is due to the truth of history to say that few, very few, of the Republican leaders of national fame had faith in Lincoln's ability for the trust assigned to him. I could name a dozen men, now idols of the nation, whose open distrust of Lincoln not only seriously embarrassed, but grievously pained and humiliated, him. They felt that the wrong man had been elected to the Presidency, and only their modesty prevented them, in each case, from naming the man who should have been chosen in his stead. Looking now over the names most illustrious in the Republican councils, I can hardly recall one who encouraged Lincoln by the confidence he so much needed. Even Seward, who had been notified as early as the 8th of December that he would be called as Premier of the new administration, and who soon thereafter had signified his acceptance of the office and continued in the most confidential relations with Lincoln, suddenly, on the 2d of March, formally notified Lincoln of his reconsideration of his acceptance. The only reason given was that circumstances had occurred since his acceptance

which seemed to render it his duty "to ask leave to withdraw that consent." The circumstances referred to were the hopeless discord and bitter jealousies among party-leaders both in and out of the Cabinet.

Lincoln found a party without a policy; the strangest confusion and bitterest antagonisms pervading those who should have been in accord, not only in purpose, but in earnest sympathy, with him in the discharge of his great duties, and he was practically like a ship tempest-tossed without compass or rudder. Even the men called to his Cabinet did not give Lincoln their confidence and co-operation. No two of them seemed to have the same views as to the policy the administration should adopt. Seward ridiculed the idea of serious civil war, and then and thereafter renewed his bond for peace in sixty days, only to be protested from month to month and from year to year. Chase believed in peaceable disunion as altogether preferable to fraternal conflict, and urged his views with earnestness upon the President. Cameron, always eminently practical, was not misled by any sentimental ideas and regarded war as inevitable. Welles was an amiable gentleman without any aggressive qualities whatever, and Smith and Bates were old and conservative, while Blair was a politician with few of the qualities of a statesman.

A reasonably correct idea of the estimate placed upon Lincoln's abilities for his position may be obtained by turning to the eulogy on Seward delivered by Charles Francis Adams in 1873. Adams was a Republican member of Congress when Lincoln was chosen President, and he was Lincoln's Minister to England during the entire period of the war. In eulogizing Seward as the master-spirit of the administration and as the power behind the throne stronger than the throne itself, he said: "I must affirm, without hesitation, that in the history of our gov-

(Photo by Gutekunst, Philadelphia.)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND HIS SON TAD.

LINCOLN'S CHARACTERISTICS.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was eminently human. As the old lady said about General Jackson when she had finally reached his presence, "He's only a man, after all." Although much as other men in the varied qualities which go to make up a single character, taking him all in all, "none but himself can be his parallel." Of all the public men I have met, he was the most difficult to analyze. His characteristics were more original, more diversified, more intense in a sober way, and yet more flexible under many circumstances, than I have ever seen in any other. Many have attempted to portray Lincoln's characteristics, and not a few have assumed to do it with great confidence. Those who have spoken most confidently of their knowledge of his personal qualities are, as a rule, those who saw least of them below the surface. He might have been seen every day during his Presidential term without ever reaching the distinctive qualities which animated and guided him, and thus hundreds of writers have assumed that they understood him when they had never seen the inner inspirations of the man at all. He was a stranger to deceit, incapable of dissembling; seemed to be the frankest and freest of conversationalists, and yet few understood him even reasonably well, and none but Lincoln ever thoroughly understood Lincoln. If I had seen less of him

I might have ventured with much greater confidence to attempt a portrayal of his individuality, but I saw him many times when Presidential honors were forgotten in Presidential sorrows, and when his great heart throbbed upon his sleeve. It was then that his uncommon qualities made themselves lustrous and often startled and confused his closest friends.

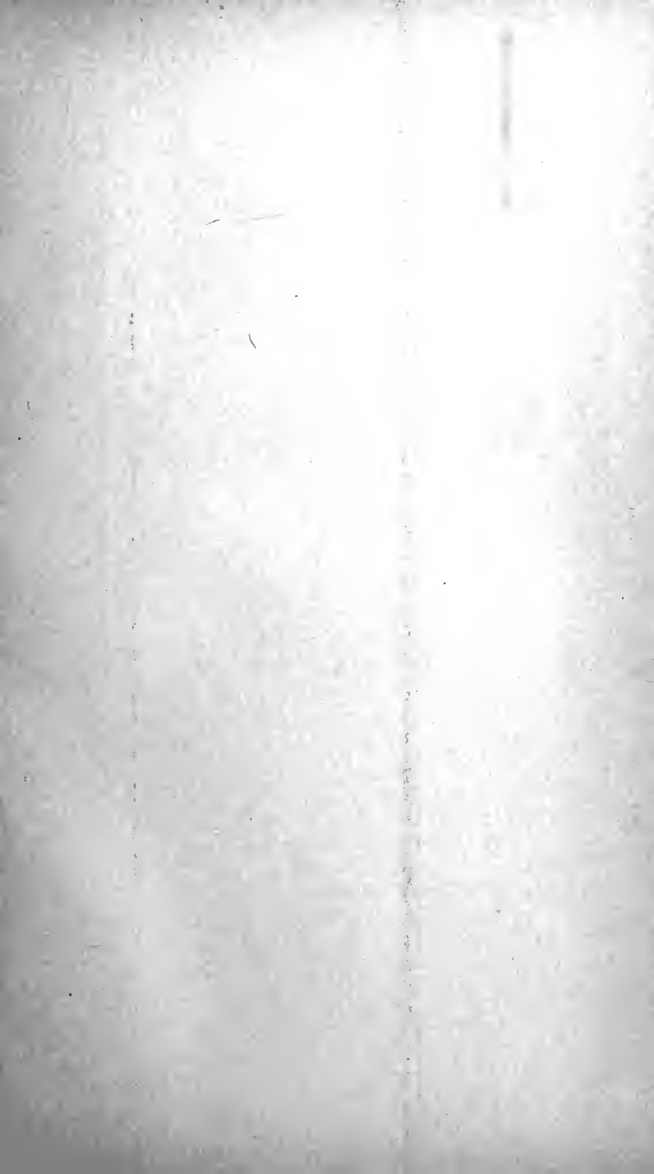
I regard Lincoln as very widely misunderstood in one of the most important attributes of his character. It has been common, during the last twenty-five years, to see publications relating to Lincoln from men who assumed that they enjoyed his full confidence. In most and perhaps all cases the writers believed what they stated, but those who assumed to speak most confidently on the subject were most mistaken. Mr. Lincoln gave his confidence to no living man without reservation. He trusted many, but he trusted only within the carefully-studied limitations of their usefulness, and when he trusted he confided, as a rule, only to the extent necessary to make that trust available. He had as much faith in mankind as is common amongst men, and it was not because he was of a distrustful nature or because of any specially selfish attribute of his character that he thus limited his confidence in all his intercourse with men. In this view of Lincoln I am fully sustained by those who knew him best. The one man who saw more of him in all the varied vicissitudes of his life from early manhood to his elevation to the Presidency was William H. Herndon, who was his close friend and law-partner for a full score of years. In analyzing the character of Lincoln he thus refers to his care as to confidants: "Mr. Lincoln never had a confidant, and therefore never unbosomed himself to others. He never spoke of his trials to me, or, so far as I knew, to any of his friends." David Davis, in whose sober judgment Lincoln had more confidence than

LINCOLN IN POLITICS.

IF Abraham Lincoln was not a master politician, I am entirely ignorant of the qualities which make up such a character. In a somewhat intimate acquaintance with the public men of the country for a period of more than a generation, I have never met one who made so few mistakes in politics as Lincoln. The man who could call Seward as Premier of his administration, with Weed the power behind the Premier, often stronger than the Premier himself, and yet hold Horace Greeley even within the ragged edges of the party lines, and the man who could call Simon Cameron to his Cabinet in Pennsylvania without alienating Governor Curtin, and who could remove Cameron from his Cabinet without alienating Cameron, would naturally be accepted as a man of much more than ordinary political sagacity. Indeed, I have never known one who approached Lincoln in the peculiar faculty of holding antagonistic elements to his own support, and maintaining close and often apparently confidential relations with each without offense to the other. This is the more remarkable from the fact that Lincoln was entirely without training in political management. I remember on one occasion, when there was much concern felt about a political contest in Pennsylvania, he summoned half a dozen or more Pennsylvania Republicans to a conference at the White House. When

we had gathered there he opened the subject in his quaint way by saying: "You know I never was a contriver; I don't know much about how things are done in politics, but I think you gentlemen understand the situation in your State, and I want to learn what may be done to ensure the success we all desire." He made exhaustive inquiry of each of the persons present as to the danger-signals of the contest, specially directing his questions to every weak point in the party lines and every strong point of the opposition. He was not content with generalities; he had no respect for mere enthusiasm. What he wanted was sober facts. He had abiding faith in the people, in their intelligence and their patriotism; and he estimated political results by ascertaining, as far as possible, the popular bearing of every vital question that was likely to arise, and he formed his conclusions by his keen intuitive perception as to how the people would be likely to deal with the issues.

While Lincoln had little appreciation of himself as candidate for President as late as 1859, the dream of reaching the Presidency evidently took possession of him in the early part of 1860, and his first efforts to advance himself as a candidate were singularly awkward and infelicitous. He had then no experience whatever as a leader of leaders, and it was not until he had made several discreditable blunders that he learned how much he must depend upon others if he would make himself President. Some Lincoln enthusiast in Kansas, with much more pretensions than power, wrote him in March, 1860, proposing to furnish a Lincoln delegation from that State to the Chicago Convention, and suggesting that Lincoln should pay the legitimate expenses of organizing, electing, and taking to the convention the promised Lincoln delegates. To this Lincoln replied that



LINCOLN'S TOMB AT SPRINGFIELD.

LINCOLN AND EMANCIPATION.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was not a sentimental Abolitionist. Indeed, he was not a sentimentalist on any subject. He was a man of earnest conviction and of sublime devotion to his faith. In many of his public letters and State papers he was as poetic as he was epigrammatic, and he was singularly felicitous in the pathos that was so often interwoven with his irresistible logic. But he never contemplated the abolition of slavery until the events of the war not only made it clearly possible, but made it an imperious necessity. As the sworn Executive of the nation it was his duty to obey the Constitution in all its provisions, and he accepted that duty without reservation. He knew that slavery was the immediate cause of the political disturbance that culminated in civil war, and I know that he believed from the beginning that if war should be persisted in, it could end only in the severance of the Union or the destruction of slavery. His supreme desire was peace, alike before the war, during the war, and in closing the war. He exhausted every means within his power to teach the Southern people that slavery could not be disturbed by his administration as long as they themselves obeyed the Constitution and laws which protected slavery, and he never uttered a word or did an act to justify, or even excuse, the South

in assuming that he meant to make any warfare upon the institution of slavery beyond protecting the free Territories from its desolating tread.

It was not until the war had been in progress for nearly two years that Lincoln decided to proclaim the policy of Emancipation, and then he was careful to assume the power as warranted under the Constitution only by the supreme necessities of war. There was no time from the inauguration of Lincoln until the 1st of January, 1863, that the South could not have returned to the Union with slavery intact in every State. His preliminary proclamation, dated September 22, 1862, gave notice that on the 1st of January, 1863, he would by public proclamation, "warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity," declare that "all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of the State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be thenceforward and for ever free." Every insurgent State had thus more than three months' formal notice that the war was not prosecuted for the abolition of slavery, but solely for the restoration of the Union, and that they could, by returning and accepting the authority of the National Government at any time before the 1st of January, 1863, preserve slavery indefinitely. Lincoln's letter to Horace Greeley, written just one month before his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, presents in the clearest and most concise manner Lincoln's views on the subject of slavery and the Union. After saying that if he could save the Union without freeing any slaves he would do it; that if he could save it by freeing all the slaves he would do it; and that if he could save it by freeing some and leaving others he would also do that, he adds: "What I do about slavery and the colored race I do because I believe it helps to save this Union, and what I forbear I forbear

(Photo by Brady, Washington.)

HANNIBAL HAMLIN, 1890.

LINCOLN AND HAMLIN.

THE fact that Abraham Lincoln conceived and executed the scheme to nominate Andrew Johnson for Vice-President in 1864 has been feebly disputed, but is now accepted as the truth of history. It was not an arbitrary exercise of political power on the part of Lincoln. He had no prejudice against Hannibal Hamlin to inspire him to compass Hamlin's defeat. He had no special love for Andrew Johnson to lead him to overthrow his old associate of 1860 and make the Military Governor of an insurgent State his fellow-candidate for 1864. Hamlin was not in close sympathy with Lincoln; on the contrary, he was known as one who passively rather than actively strengthened a powerful cabal of Republican leaders in their aggressive hostility to Lincoln and his general policy; but Lincoln was incapable of yielding to prejudice, however strong, in planning his great campaign for re-election in 1864. Had Hamlin been ten times more offensive than he was to Lincoln, it would not have halted Lincoln for a moment in favoring Hamlin's renomination if he believed it good politics to do so. He rejected Hamlin not because he hated him; he accepted Johnson not because he loved him. He was guided in what he did, or what he did not, in planning the great campaign of his life, that he believed involved the destiny of the country itself, by the single purpose of making success as nearly certain as possible.

Hamlin was nominated for the Vice-Presidency in 1860 simply because he was a representative Republican fresh from the Democratic party. Another consideration that favored his selection was the fact that his State had been carried into the Republican party under his leadership, and that its State election in September would be the finger-board of success or defeat in the national contest. His position as Representative, Senator, and Governor, and his admitted ability and high character, fully justified his nomination as the candidate for Vice-President; but when elected there was the usual steadily widening chasm between him and the Executive, and, like nearly or quite all Vice-Presidents, he drifted into the embrace of the opposition to his chief. It was this opposition, led by men of such consummate ability as Wade of Ohio and Henry Winter Davis of Maryland, that admonished Lincoln of the necessity of putting himself in the strongest possible attitude for the then admittedly doubtful battle of 1864. While the defeat of Lee at Gettysburg and the surrender of Vicksburg the year before had done much to inspire faith in the success of the war, the Confederacy was stubbornly maintaining its armies. The opening of the new year of 1864 called for large drafts of men to fill the thinned ranks of the Union forces, and there was a powerful undertow of despondency among the loyal people of the North. The war was costing $3,000,000 a day, and after three years of bloody conflict the end was not in view. The Republican leaders in the early part of 1864 were divided in councils, distracted by the conflicts of ambition, and very many of the ablest of them regarded the defeat of the party as not only possible, but more than probable. The one man who fully understood the peril and who studied carefully how to avert it was Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln, as was his usual custom, consulted with all

(Photo by Gutekunst, Philadelphia.)

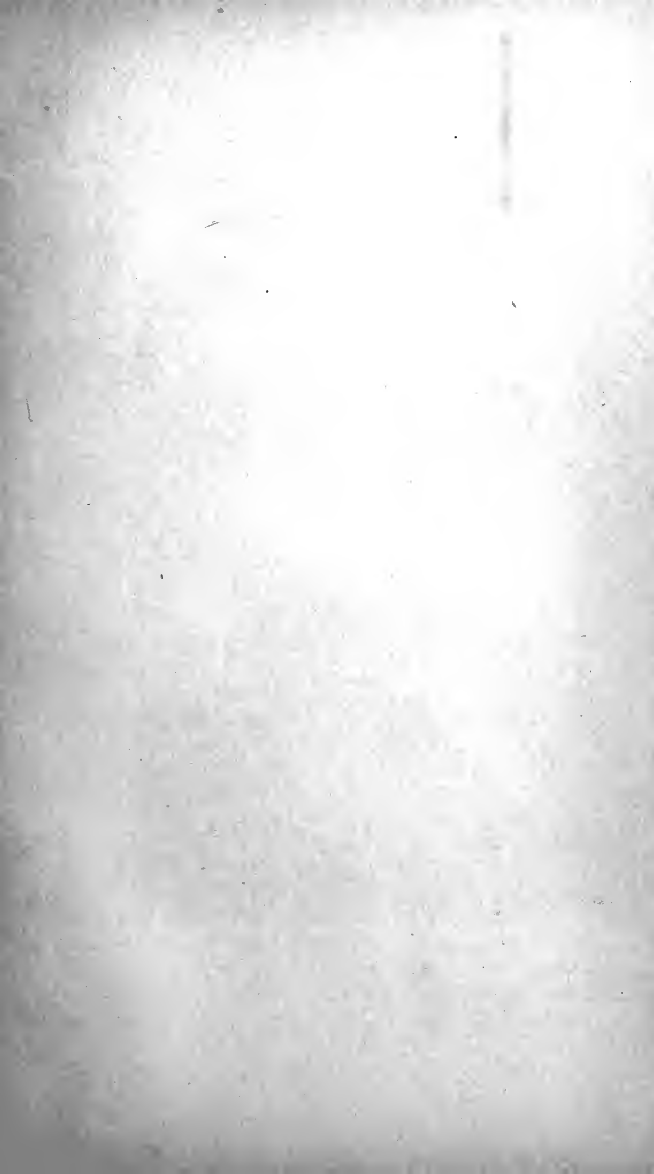
SALMON P. CHASE.

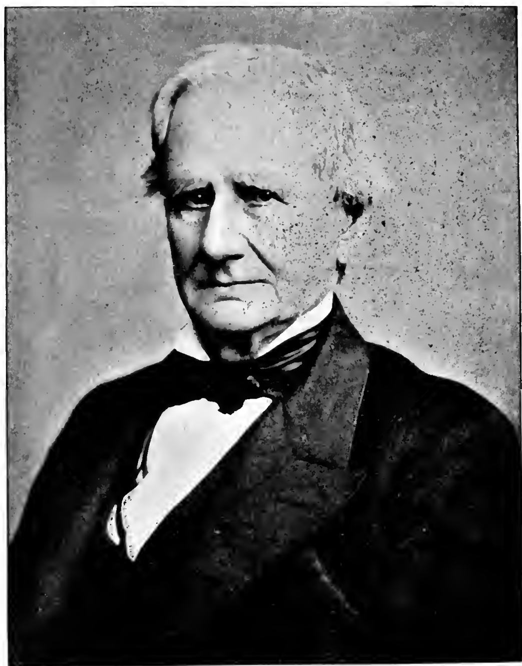
LINCOLN AND CHASE.

SALMON P. CHASE was the most irritating fly in the Lincoln ointment from the inauguration of the new administration in 1861 until the 29th of June, 1864, when his resignation as Secretary of the Treasury was finally accepted. He was an annual resigner in the Cabinet, having petulantly tendered his resignation in 1862, again in 1863, and again in 1864, when he was probably surprised by Mr. Lincoln's acceptance of it. It was soon after Lincoln's unanimous renomination, and when Chase's dream of succeeding Lincoln as President had perished, at least for the time. He was one of the strongest intellectual forces of the entire administration, but in politics he was a theorist and a dreamer and was unbalanced by overmastering ambition. He never forgave Lincoln for the crime of having been preferred for President over him, and while he was a pure and conscientious man, his prejudices and disappointments were vastly stronger than himself, and there never was a day during his continuance in the Cabinet when he was able to approach justice to Lincoln. Like Sumner, he entered public life ten years before the war by election to the Senate through a combination of Democrats and Free-Soilers, and it is worthy of note that these two most brilliant and tireless of the great anti-slavery leaders cast their last votes for Democratic candidates for President.

From the day that Chase entered the Cabinet he seems to have been consumed with the idea that he must be Lincoln's successor in 1864, and to that end he systematically directed his efforts, and often sought, by flagrant abuse of the power of his department, to weaken his chief. He will stand in history as the great financier of the war; as the man who was able to maintain the national credit in the midst of rebellion and disruption, and who gave the country the best banking system the world has ever known. In that one duty he was practical and amenable to wholesome counsel, and his unblemished personal and official integrity gave great weight to his policy as Secretary of the Treasury. With all the vexation he gave Lincoln, and with the many reasons he gave his chief to regard him as perfidious, Lincoln never ceased to appreciate his value as a Cabinet officer. In 1863, when Chase had become an open candidate for the Presidency, and when many of his political movements were personally offensive to the President, Lincoln said of Chase: "I have determined to shut my eyes so far as possible to everything of the sort. Mr. Chase makes a good Secretary, and I shall keep him where he is. If he becomes President, all right. I hope we may never have a worse man. I have observed with regret his plan of strengthening himself." This expression from Lincoln conveys a very mild idea of his real feelings on the subject. In point of fact, Lincoln was not only profoundly grieved at Chase's candidacy, but he was constantly irritated at the methods Chase employed to promote his nomination.

I never saw Lincoln unbalanced except during the fall of 1863, when Chase was making his most earnest efforts to win the Republican nomination. The very widespread distrust toward Lincoln cherished by Republican leaders gave him good reason to apprehend the success of a com-





(Photo by Brady, Washington.)

SIMON CAMERON, 1865.

LINCOLN AND CAMERON.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN had more varied and complicated relations with Simon Cameron than with any other Pennsylvanian during his Presidential term. Indeed, Cameron fills more pages in the annals of Pennsylvania politics than any citizen of the State since the organization of our government. He is the only man who was four times elected to the United States Senate by the Pennsylvania Legislature until his son attained the same distinction as his successor, and he would have won a fifth election without a serious contest had he not voluntarily resigned to assure the succession to his son. Without great popular following, he was the most conspicuous of all our Pennsylvania politicians, measured by the single standard of success in obtaining political honors and power. He was first elected to the Senate in 1845 to succeed Buchanan, who had been transferred to the Polk Cabinet. The tariff of 1842 was then a vital issue in Pennsylvania, and Cameron was known as a positive protectionist. The Legislature was Democratic, and had nominated the late Chief Justice Woodward with apparent unanimity to succeed Buchanan; but Cameron organized a bolt from the Democratic party, commanded the solid Whig vote on the tariff issue, and was thus elected. The Senate to which he was chosen was Democratic, and he exhibited his peculiar power over that body when he served in it by the rejection of

Judge Woodward when nominated by President Polk as Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. He made a memorable record during his early Senatorial service by his earnest appeal to Vice-President Dallas in favor of protection, when it was known that the repeal of the tariff of 1842 would depend upon the casting vote of the Vice-President. At the expiration of his term, in 1849, Cameron was a candidate for re-election. The balance of power in the Legislature was held by Native American Representatives from Philadelphia, elected on the Fusion ticket. He failed, however, to divert that element from the Whigs, and abandoned the struggle, giving the field to James Cooper, the regular Whig candidate, who was successful.

In 1854 a strange political revolution occurred in Pennsylvania, in which the new American or Know-Nothing party elected the Whig candidate for Governor and the Democratic candidate for Canal Commissioner, and carried an overwhelming majority of the Legislature, embracing nominees of both parties. Cameron supported the Democratic ticket, and made a speech in its favor the night before election, but immediately after the election he associated himself with the Americans and became an aggressive candidate for United States Senator. This was the beginning of the factional conflict between Cameron and Curtin (then Secretary of the Commonwealth) that continued as long as they were in active political life. The new party was without leadership or discipline, and was speedily broken into fragments by a dozen aspirants for the Senatorship, of whom Cameron and Curtin were the leading and apparently only hopeful candidates. The struggle became exceptionally bitter, the joint convention meeting and adjourning from time to time without succeeding in a choice, until finally it became a matter of necessity

(Photo by Brady, Washington.)

EDWIN M. STANTON, 1865.

LINCOLN AND STANTON.

OF all the men intimately connected with Abraham Lincoln during our civil war, Edwin M. Stanton presented the strangest medley of individual attributes. He was a man of whom two histories might be written as widely diverging as night and day, portraying him as worthy of eminent praise and as worthy of scorching censure, and yet both absolutely true. His dominant quality was his heroic mould. He could be heroic to a degree that seemed almost superhuman, and yet at times submissive to the very verge of cowardice. Like Lincoln, he fully trusted no man; but, unlike Lincoln, he distrusted all, and I doubt whether any man prominently connected with the government gave confidence to so few as did Stanton. He in turn trusted and hated nearly every general prominent in the early part of the war. He was McClellan's closest personal friend and counselor when he entered the Lincoln Cabinet, and later became McClellan's most vindictive and vituperative foe. The one general of the war who held his confidence without interruption from the time he became Commander-in-Chief of the armies until the close of the war was General Grant, and he literally commanded it by distinctly defining his independent attitude as General-in-Chief when he accepted his commission as Lieutenant-General. He often spoke of, and to, public men, military and civil, with a withering sneer. I have heard him scores of

times thus speak of Lincoln, and several times thus speak to Lincoln. He was a man of extreme moods; often petulant, irritating, and senselessly unjust, and at times one of the most amiable, genial, and delightful conversationalists I have ever met. He loved antagonism, and there was hardly a period during his remarkable service as War Minister in which he was not, on some more or less important point, in positive antagonism with the President. In his antagonisms he was, as a rule, offensively despotic, and often pressed them upon Lincoln to the very utmost point of Lincoln's forbearance; but he knew when to call a halt upon himself, as he well knew that there never was a day or an hour during his service in the Cabinet that Lincoln was not his absolute master. He respected Lincoln's authority because it was greater than his own, but he had little respect for Lincoln's fitness for the responsible duties of the Presidency. I have seen him at times as tender and gentle as a woman, his heart seeming to agonize over the sorrows of the humblest; and I have seen him many more times turn away with the haughtiest contempt from appeals which should at least have been treated with respect. He had few personal and fewer political friends, and he seemed proud of the fact that he had more personal and political enemies than any prominent officer of the government. Senators, Representatives, and high military commanders were often offended by his wanton arrogance, and again thawed into cordial relations by his effusive kindness. Taken all in all, Edwin M. Stanton was capable of the grandest and the meanest actions of any great man I have ever known, and he has reared imperishable monuments to the opposing qualities he possessed.

Stanton had rendered an incalculable service to the nation by his patriotic efforts in the Cabinet of Bu-

(Photo by Gutekunst, Phila.)

GENERAL U. S. GRANT, 1864.

LINCOLN AND GRANT.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN and Ulysses S. Grant were entire strangers to each other personally until the 9th of March, 1864, when Lincoln handed Grant his commission as Lieutenant-General, which made him three days later Commander-in-Chief of all the armies of the Union. Although Grant entered the army as a citizen of Lincoln's own State, he had resided there only a little more than a year. When he retired from the army by resignation on the 31st of July, 1854, as a captain, he selected Missouri as his home and settled on a farm near St. Louis. He had won promotion at the battles of Molino del Rey and Chapultepec in the Mexican War, and was brevetted for special gallantry. During the nearly seven years between his retirement from the army and re-entering the military service at the beginning of the civil war he had done little or nothing to make himself known to fame. He had moved from Missouri to Galena early in 1860 to improve his worldly condition by accepting a salary of $600 from his two brothers, who were then engaged in the leather business. After remaining with them for a year his salary was advanced to $800, and in a letter to a friend he exhibited his gratification at his business success and expressed the hope of reaching what then seemed to be his highest ambition—a partnership in the firm. His life in Galena was quiet and unobtrusive as was Grant's habit under

all circumstances; and when the first call for troops was issued and Grant brought a company from Galena to Springfield without any friends to press his promotion, it is not surprising that, while political colonels were turned out with great rapidity, Grant remained without a command. He served on the staff of Governor Yates for several weeks, giving him the benefit of his military experience in organizing new troops, but it does not seem to have occurred to Grant to suggest his own appointment to a command or to Governor Yates to tender him one. He returned to Galena, and on the 24th of May, 1861, sent a formal request to the Adjutant-General of the army at Washington for an assignment to military duty "until the close of the war in such capacity as may be offered." To this no reply was ever received, and a month later he made a personal visit to the headquarters of General McClellan, then in command of the Ohio volunteers at Cincinnati, hoping that McClellan would tender him a position on his staff; but he failed to meet McClellan, and returned home without suggesting to any one a desire to enter the service under the Cincinnati commander.

It was a wayward and insubordinate regiment at Springfield that called Grant back to the military service and started him on his matchless career. The Twenty-first Illinois defied the efforts of Governor Yates to reduce it to discipline, and in despair he telegraphed to the modest Captain Grant at Galena, asking him to come and accept the colonelcy. The prompt answer came: "I accept the regiment and will start immediately." It is needless to say that the appearance of a plain, ununiformed, and modest man like Grant made little impression at first upon his insubordinate command, but in a very short time he made it the best disciplined regiment from the State, and the men as proud

(Photo by Gutekunst, Philadelphia.)

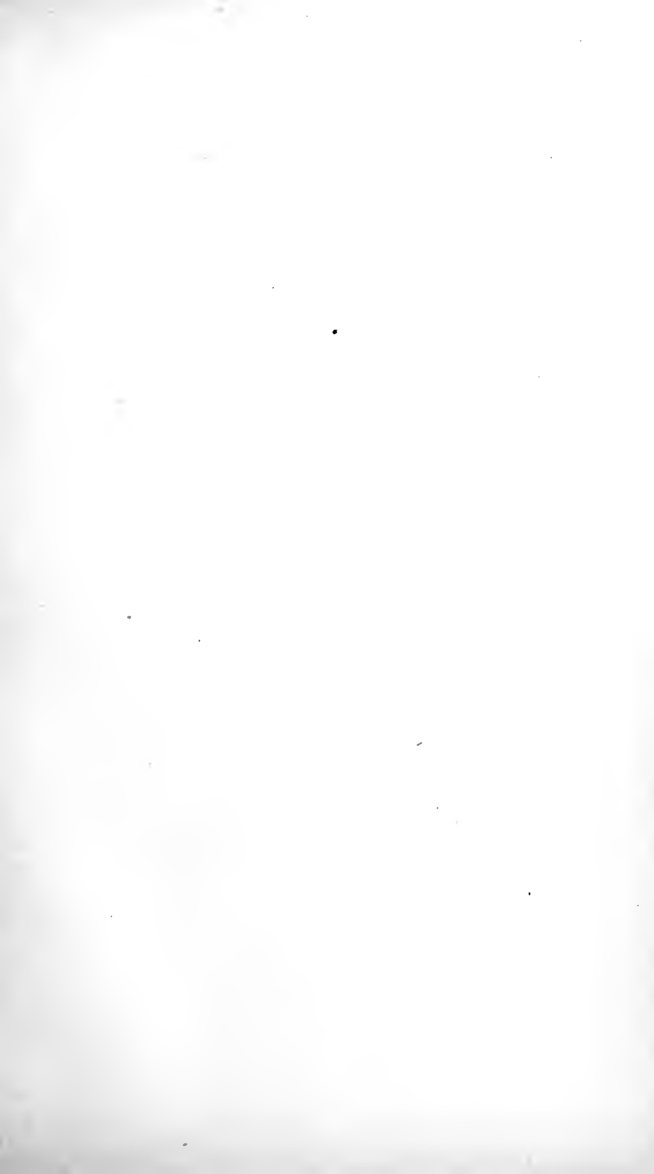
GENERAL GEORGE B. M'CLELLAN, 1862.

LINCOLN AND McCLELLAN.

NOT until all the lingering personal, political, and military passions of the war shall have perished can the impartial historian tell the true story of Abraham Lincoln's relations to George B. McClellan, nor will the just estimate of McClellan as a military chieftain be recorded until the future historian comes to his task entirely free from the prejudices of the present. Although more than a quarter of a century has elapsed since the close of the war, and countless contributions have been given to the history of that conflict from every shade of conviction that survived it, McClellan's ability as a military commander, and the correctness of Lincoln's action in calling him to command and in dismissing him from command, are as earnestly disputed to-day as they were in the white heat of the personal and political conflicts of the time. Notwithstanding the bitter partisan assaults which have been made upon McClellan in the violence of party struggles, at times impugning his skill, his courage, and his patriotism, it is safe to say that fair-minded men of every political faith now testify to the absolute purity of his patriotism, to his exceptional skill as a military organizer, and to his courage as a commander. I knew McClellan well, and I believe that no reasonably just man could have known him without yielding to him the highest measure of personal respect. He was one of the most excellent

and lovable characters I have ever met, and that he was patriotic in everything that he did, however he may have erred, and that he would have given his life as a sacrifice to his army or his country had duty required it, will not be doubted within the circle of his personal associations. I saw him frequently after he came to Washington heralded as the "Young Napoleon," to perform the herculean task of organizing the best army that ever was organized in any country within the same period of time. I saw him when he started upon his Peninsula campaign with the hope of victory beaming from his bright young face, and I stood close by his side most of the day when he fought his last battle at Antietam. Only a few months thereafter he was finally relieved from his command, and his military career ended on November 5, 1862, when, by order of the President, he transferred his army to General Burnside and went to Trenton, New Jersey, "for further orders." The "further orders" never came until Presidential election day, 1864, when McClellan resigned his commission as major-general in the army and Sheridan was appointed to his place.

Both Lincoln and McClellan now live only in history, and history will judge them by their achievements as it has judged all mankind. Lincoln was a successful President, and, like the great Roman Germanicus, "fortunate in the opportunity of his death." McClellan was an unsuccessful general and a defeated politician. Such will be the imperishable records of history as to these two men; but even the next generation will see continued disputation as to McClellan's capabilities as a commander, and Lincoln will be censured alike for having maintained and supported McClellan as a military leader, and for having failed to appreciate and support him after having called him to responsible command.



(Photo by Sarony, New York.)

GENERAL WILLIAM T. SHERMAN, 1890.

LINCOLN AND SHERMAN.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN and William T. Sherman had never met until Sherman came to Washington to visit his brother, the present Senator Sherman, ten days after Lincoln's inauguration. Sherman's mission to the capital was not to obtain a command. He had resigned as president of a military institute in Louisiana, because, as he frankly said to the State officials who controlled the institution, he could not remain and owe allegiance to a State that had withdrawn from the Union. In his letter of resignation, dated January 18, 1861, he said: "Should Louisiana withdraw from the Federal Union, I prefer to maintain my allegiance to the Constitution as long as a fragment of it survives, and my longer stay here would be a wrong in every sense of the word." He left New Orleans about the 1st of March to make his home in the North. Like Grant, he tendered his services to the government, but, again like Grant, his offer was not answered. His first meeting with Lincoln was in company with his Senator brother to pay a brief visit of courtesy to the President. After the Senator had transacted some political business with Lincoln, he turned to his brother and said: "Mr. President, this is my brother, Colonel Sherman, who is just up from Louisiana; he may give you some information you want." To this Lincoln replied, as reported by Sherman himself: "Ah! How are they getting along down there?"

Sherman answered: "They think they are getting along swimmingly; they are prepared for war." To which Lincoln responded: "Oh, well, I guess we'll manage to keep house." Sherman records in his *Memoirs* that he was "sadly disappointed," and that he "broke out on John, damning the politicians generally," saying: "You have got things in a hell of a fix; you may get them out as best you can." Sherman then, as ever, was ruggedly honest and patriotic, and often more impressive than elegant in his manner of speech. Some old St. Louis friends had obtained for him the presidency of a street-railway of that city at a salary of $2500. Speaking of this position, he says: "This suited me exactly, and I answered Turner that I would accept with thanks."

Before Sherman was comfortably installed in his position as street-railway president, Postmaster-General Blair telegraphed him, on the 6th of April, asking him to accept a chief clerkship in the War Department, with the assurance that he would be made Assistant Secretary of War when Congress met. Sherman answered with the laconic dispatch: "I cannot accept." In a letter written at the same time to Blair he says that after his visit to Washington, where he saw no chance of employment, he had gone to St. Louis, accepted an official position and established his home, and that he was not at liberty to change. He added that he was thankful for the compliment, and that he wished "the administration all success in its almost impossible task of governing this distracted and anarchical people." A few days thereafter General Frank Blair called on Sherman and said that he was authorized to select a brigadier-general to command the Department of Missouri, and he tendered the position to Sherman, who declined it, and General Lyon was then appointed. Feeling, however, as the clouds of war darkened upon the country, that his ser-

(From Sypher's Pennsylvania Reserves.)

ANDREW G. CURTIN, 1860.

LINCOLN AND CURTIN.

ANDREW G. CURTIN has written the most brilliant chapters in the annals of our great civil conflict by his official record as Governor of Pennsylvania. I am not unmindful, in paying this high tribute to the great War Governor of the Union, that there are many Pennsylvania names that have become memorable for their heroism in the struggle for the preservation of our free institutions. Nor am I unmindful that Pennsylvania has within her borders the great battle-field of the war, and that the names of such Pennsylvania heroes as Meade, Reynolds, and Hancock are inseparably linked with the decisive victory that gave assured safety and unsullied freedom to the Union. While Pennsylvania heroism was making itself immortal on every battle-field of the war, the civil administration of the State was more intimately involved with every issue growing out of the war than that of any other State of the Republic. Pennsylvania was second only to New York in population and physical power, and first of all in the importance of her position and in moulding the policy of the States and their relations to the parent government. Bordered by slave commonwealths from her eastern to her western lines, and more exposed to the perils of war than any of the other loyal States, her people were conservative to the utmost limits of positive loyalty to the Union. In January, 1861, when Curtin was inaugurated

as Governor, not a single Northern State had officially defined its relations to the Union or its attitude as to the threatened civil war, and any utterance from a State of such pre-eminent physical and political power could not but make its impression on every State of the Union, North and South.

Few of the present day can have any just appreciation of the exceptional delicacy and grave responsibility of the position of the new Governor of Pennsylvania. An ill-advised utterance from him might have wantonly inflamed the war spirit of the South or chilled the loyal devotion of the North. He was called upon to define, in advance of all the other States, the position of the North when confronted by armed treason, and there were no precedents in our history to guide him. His inaugural address was prepared entirely by himself before he came to the capital to assume his most responsible trust. Before he delivered it he summoned to his council a number of the most intelligent and considerate men of both parties in the State, but after careful and dispassionate reflection upon every sentence of the document it was not substantially changed in any particular, and the highest tribute that history could pay to his statesmanship is in the fact that the position of his great State, and its relations with the general government as defined in that address, were accepted by every loyal State and vindicated alike by the loyal judgment of the nation and by the arbitrament of the sword.

Curtin stood single among the public men of Pennsylvania in 1860 as a popular leader. His strength was with the people rather than in political invention. He had made himself conspicuously known by his services as Secretary of the Commonwealth when that officer was charged with the control of the school system. It was he who first organized a distinct department to extend

Executive Mansion,

Washington, April 13, 1863.

Hon. Andrew G Curtin

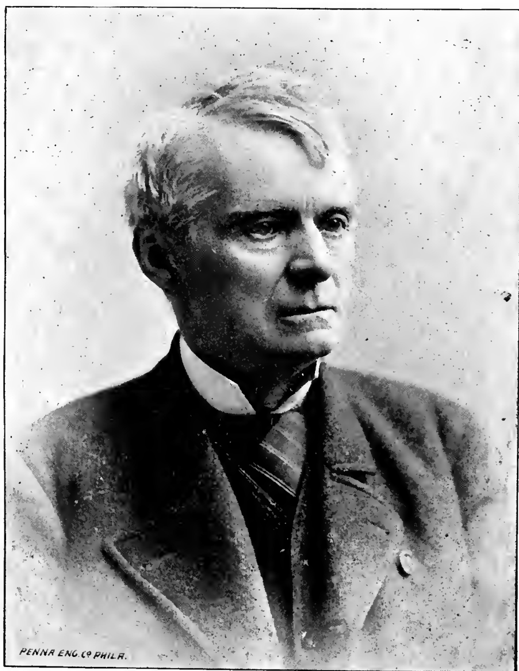
My dear Sir:

If, after the expiration of your present term as Governor of Pennsylvania, I shall continue in office here, and you shall desire to go abroad, you can do so with one of the first class missions.

Yours truly

A. Lincoln

FAC-SIMILE OF LINCOLN'S LETTER TO CURTIN.



(Photo by Brady, Washington.)

ANDREW G. CURTIN, 1892.

(Photo by Brady, Washington.)

THADDEUS STEVENS, 1866.

LINCOLN AND STEVENS.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN and Thaddeus Stevens were strangely mated. Lincoln as President and Stevens as Commoner of the nation during the entire period of our sectional war assumed the highest civil responsibilities in the administrative and legislative departments of the government. While Lincoln was President of the whole people, Stevens, as Commoner, was their immediate representative and oracle in the popular branch of Congress when the most momentous legislative measures of our history were conceived and enacted. No two men were so much alike in all the sympathy of greatness for the friendless and the lowly, and yet no two men could have been more unlike in the methods by which they sought to obtain the same great end. Lincoln's humanity was one of the master attributes of his character, and it was next to impossible for him to punish even those most deserving of it. In Stevens humanity and justice were singularly blended, and while his heart was ever ready to respond to the appeal of sorrow, he was one of the sternest of men in the administration of justice upon those who had oppressed the helpless. No man pleaded so eloquently in Congress for the deliverance of the bondmen of the South as did Stevens, and he made ceaseless battle for every measure needed by ignorant freedmen for the enjoyment of their rights obtained through the madness of Southern rebellion; and there was no man of all

our statesmen whose voice was so eloquent for the swift punishment of the authors of the war. He declared on the floor of Congress that if he had the power he would summon a military commission to try, convict, and execute Jefferson Davis and other leaders of the rebellion "for the murders at Andersonville, the murders at Salisbury, and the shooting down of prisoners-of-war in cold blood;" and when the whole world was shocked by the relentless vengeance of Juarez in the summary execution of Maximilian, he was the one man of Congress who rose and boldly defended the Mexican President; and his ground of defence was that Maximilian had sought to usurp power from the weak. Lincoln's humanity was always predominant in his nature and always reflected itself in his public and private acts. He never signed a death-warrant unless it was absolutely unavoidable, and then always with a degree of sorrow that could not be concealed. He earnestly desired that Davis and all Southern leaders who might be called to account after the war for precipitating the nation into fraternal strife should safely escape from the country; and Maximilian could not have appealed in vain to Lincoln for his life had it been within his power to save him. Such were the conflicting attributes of the two great civil leaders of the country during the war. Each filled his great trust with masterly fidelity, and the opposing qualities of each were potent upon the other.

The country has almost forgotten the exceptionally responsible position of Stevens as the Great Commoner of our civil war. It is the one high trust of a free government that must be won solely by ability and merit. The Commoner of a republic is the organ of the people, and he can hold his place only when all confess his pre-eminent qualities for the discharge of his duties. Presidents, Cabinets, Senators, and Representatives may be

Washington Dec 16. 1865

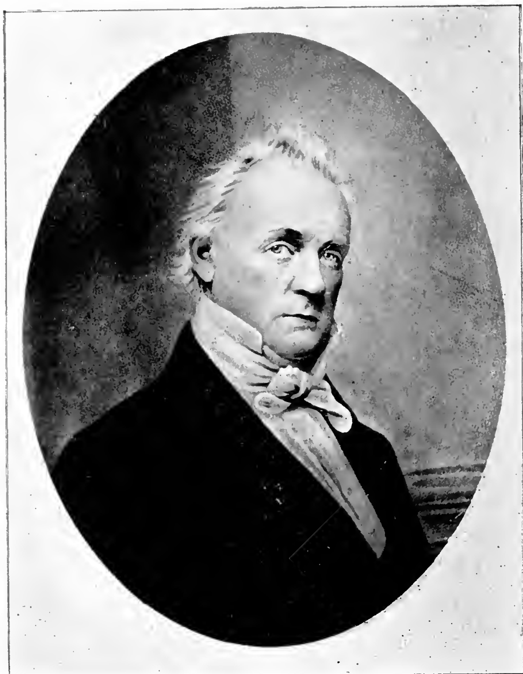
Dear Sir

I thank you for the kindness to me personally in your letter. But I more particularly thank you for the grand argument in favor of the right policy — I am delighted to speak from [illegible] in a day of 100,000 [illegible] — Why cannot you get up such a paper?

Thaddeus Stevens

Col. McClure Esq

FAC-SIMILE OF LETTER FROM STEVENS.



(Photo by Saylor, Lancaster, Pa.)

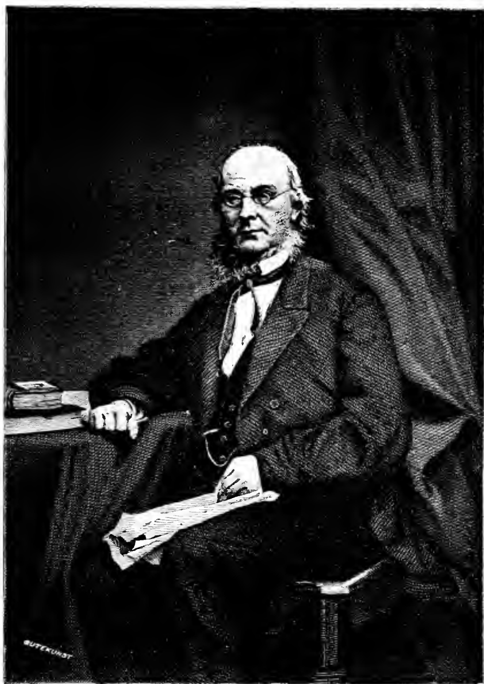
JAMES BUCHANAN, 1865.

LINCOLN AND BUCHANAN.

IT is now more than thirty years since James Buchanan retired from the office of President of the United States, but I doubt whether there is any one of our great national characters whose relations to our civil war are so widely and so flagrantly misunderstood. It will surprise many at this day when I say that Abraham Lincoln took up the reins of government just where James Buchanan left them, and continued precisely the same policy toward the South that Buchanan had inaugurated, until the Southern leaders committed the suicidal act of firing upon Fort Sumter. From the time that Buchanan's original Cabinet was disrupted on the sectional issues that culminated in armed rebellion, the administration of Buchanan was not only thoroughly loyal to the preservation of the Union, but it fixed the policy that Lincoln accepted, and from which he took no marked departure until actual war came upon him. This is not the common appreciation of Buchanan among the American people, but it is the truth of history. He retired from his high office in the very flood-tide of sectional and partisan passion. The loyal people were frenzied to madness by what was regarded as the perfidy of Buchanan's War Minister, Mr. Floyd, in shipping valuable arms and munitions to the South; by the insolent treason of his Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Cobb; by the boldly-asserted and generally-believed

treachery of his Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Toucey, in scattering our navy throughout the world; and it is now accepted by many, amongst even intelligent people of this country, that Buchanan was faithless to his duty in failing to reinforce Major Anderson at Sumter. In addition to these deeply-seated unjust convictions in regard to Buchanan, he is commonly believed to have been in hostility to the Lincoln administration and to the war, and his sympathies to have been with the South in the bloody struggle for the preservation of the Union. It is certainly time that these utterly erroneous and most unjust impressions as to Buchanan should be dissipated; and, fortunately for his own good name, he has left on record the most positive evidence of his devotion to the Union and his earnest support of the government in the most vigorous prosecution of the war that had been, as he always held, wantonly precipitated upon the nation by the South. I never was in political sympathy with Buchanan while he was in public life, excepting the few closing months of his administration, when, as I then knew, both he and his Cabinet were estranged from their ultra-Democratic friends North and South, and were in daily intercourse with the leading friends of Lincoln as the incoming President. My personal acquaintance with him was of the most casual character, and I have therefore neither lingering personal nor political affection to inspire me to any strained attempt to vindicate his memory.

Buchanan as President should be judged by the circumstances under which he reached that position, by his long-cherished and conscientious convictions, and by his peculiar political environment, that led him into the most sympathetic relations with the South. It should be remembered that he was elected President over General Fremont, a distinctly sectional candidate who was



HORACE GREELEY, 1872.

LINCOLN AND GREELEY.

HORACE GREELEY was one of the earliest and most fretting of the many thorns in the political pathway of Abraham Lincoln. They served together in Congress in the winter of 1848–49, when Greeley was chosen to a short term to fill a vacancy. Speaking of Lincoln some years after his death, Greeley, referring to his association with him in Congress, said that Lincoln was "personally a favorite on our side," and adds: "He seemed a quiet, good-natured man; did not aspire to leadership, and seldom claimed the floor." For ten years after these two memorable characters separated as members of Congress Lincoln was little known or heard of outside of his State of Illinois, and when his great contest with Douglas for the Senate attracted the attention of the whole country in 1858, Greeley, with his powerful Republican organ, vastly the most potent political journal in the country, took positive grounds in favor of the return of Douglas to the Senate by the Republicans of Illinois, because of Douglas' open hostility to the Lecompton policy of the Buchanan administration. This attitude of Greeley's *Tribune* was one of the most serious obstacles that confronted Lincoln in his great campaign against Douglas, and it is possible that the influence of the *Tribune* may have lost Lincoln the legislature. He carried the popular vote and elected the Republican State ticket, but Douglas won the legislature

and was re-elected to the Senate. Thus did Greeley antagonize Lincoln in the first great battle he made for national leadership in politics, and with the exception of a single act of Greeley's, in which he served Lincoln to an extent that can hardly be measured, when in the early part of 1860 he opened the broadsides of the *Tribune* against Seward's nomination for President, he was a perpetual thorn in Lincoln's side, seldom agreeing with him on any important measure, and almost constantly criticising him boldly and often bitterly.

The first assault made on the Seward lines that attracted any attention from the country was the unexpected and aggressive revolt of Greeley's *Tribune* against Seward some months before the meeting of the Chicago Convention that nominated Lincoln. It attracted special attention from considerate Republicans throughout the country, because this assault came from the ablest Republican editor of the nation, from Seward's own State, and from one who was presumed to be Seward's personal and political friend. It was not then known to the public that on the 11th of November, 1854, he had written a pungent letter to Seward and formally severed all political association with him, to take effect in the following February, when Seward was re-elected to the United States Senate. The letter was written in strict confidence, but in 1860, when the friends of Seward keenly felt Greeley's criticisms on Seward's availability as a Presidential candidate, and especially in the bitter disappointment of Seward's friends after his defeat at Chicago, such free allusions were made to the contents of this letter and to Greeley's personal animosity that at Greeley's request the letter was made public. Until Greeley had thus thrown his great *Tribune* into the contest against Seward's nomination Seward was the generally-accepted Republican candidate for President in

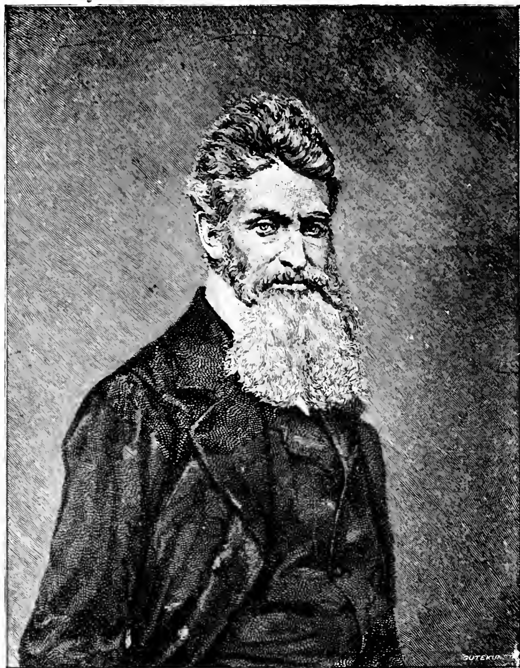
New-York Tribune.

Private.
New York, Nov. 10, 1872

My dear Friend:
I am a man of many sorrows, and doubtless have deserved them, but I beg to say that I do not forget the gallant though luckless struggle you made in my behalf. I am not well.
Yours,
Horace Greeley

Col. A. K. McClure,
144 So. Sixth,
Phila.

GREELEY'S LAST LETTER.



(Photo by Gutekunst, Phila.)

JOHN BROWN.

AN EPISODE OF JOHN BROWN'S RAID.

FAR down in the beautiful Cumberland Valley, the old-time heartsome village of Chambersburg was one of the chief attractions a generation ago. It was founded by the sturdy Scotch-Irish pioneers, who carried their severe religion and not less severe detestation of despotism with them, and mingled their prayers with their warfare against the savage and the soldiers of King George. The memorable pioneer whose name the village bears chose a lovely spot as his home and the heritage of his children, where the soft murmurs of the crystal waters of Falling Spring are lost in the Conococheague, and the united waters course through the centre of the town on their journey to the sea. Here more than a century had been devoted to the genial civilization that made Chambersburg first in the affections of its people; and its homes, palatial for that day; its grand elms and lindens which arched the walks with their shades; its cultured people, with just pride of ancestry and equal pride of present character and usefulness,—made it one of the most delightful of Pennsylvania towns for citizen or visitor. It had none of the paralysis that comes when "wealth accumulates and men decay;" large fortunes were unknown, but plenty, thrift, and comfort stamped their impress upon the community.

In the summer of 1859 a man of rather rude aspect, but of grave and quiet demeanor, was noticed by the

village crowd that usually gathered in social converse about the post-office while the evening mail was being distributed. He attracted little attention, as he seldom spoke save when spoken to, and then only in the briefest way. He was known as "Dr. Smith," and was reputed to be engaged in the development of iron-mines on the Potomac, some twenty-five miles distant. He lodged at a private boarding-house off from the centre of the town, and there was nothing in his sayings or doings to excite any apprehension that his mission was anything else than a peaceful one. This man was John Brown, then of Kansas fame, and later immortalized in song and story throughout every civilized land. The supposed mining-implements which he was storing in Chambersburg were the rude pikes with which the negroes of Virginia were to be armed in their expected insurrection against their masters. There was not a man, woman, or child in Chambersburg who then dreamed that "Dr. Smith" was John Brown—not one who knew or suspected his real purpose. None of the many who then saw him casually from day to day could have dreamed that the harmless-looking and acting "Dr. Smith" was engaged in a drama the sequel of which would be enacted when the vandals' torch left the beautiful old village in ashes only five years later. The South ever believed that John Brown made Chambersburg the base for his mad raid on Harper's Ferry because he had many sympathizing confidants and abetters there; and that unjust prejudice resolved all doubts as to dooming the town when McCausland rioted in its destruction on the 30th of July, 1864.

In the early part of October, 1859, two men, unknown to me, entered my office and asked to submit some legal matters in private. We retired to the private office, when the younger of the two, an intelligent and evidently positive man, gave his name as Francis Jackson

OUR UNREWARDED HEROES.

OUR UNREWARDED HEROES.

ALL great wars produce great victors, and they are crowned with the greenest laurels of the people for whose cause they have achieved success. These chieftains live in history and their memory is gratefully cherished long after they have passed away; but every great war has also its unrewarded heroes, whose merits are often equal to, sometimes even greater than, those who attained the highest measure of distinction. In war and politics nothing is successful but success, and the unsuccessful military commander and the unsuccessful politician are forgotten, whatever may be their personal merits, while those who win victories win the applause of the world. Accident, fortuitous circumstance, and personal or political influence aid largely in winning promotion in both peace and war, and a lost battle, however bravely and skillfully fought, often deposes a commander, while a victory won, even in spite of the absence of the elements of greatness, may make a name immortal. The rewarded heroes of our late civil war are well known to the country and to the world, but that great conflict left unrewarded heroes whose names and merits should be crystallized in the history of the Republic. Prominent among these are General George G. Meade, General George H. Thomas, General Fitz John Porter, General G. K. Warren, and General D. C. Buell.

The country has never done justice to General Meade

as a military commander, and our varied histories, as a rule, have grudgingly conceded to him only what could not be withheld from him. The man who fought and won the battle of Gettysburg should have been the commander-in-chief of the armies of the Union and held that position during life. It was the great battle of the war; it was the Waterloo of the Confederacy, and the victory there achieved was won by the skill of the commanding general and the heroism of his army. No man ever accepted a command under circumstances as embarrassing and in every way discouraging as those which confronted General Meade when he succeeded Hooker as commander of the Army of the Potomac. That superb army had never up to that time won a decisive victory in a great battle. It had been defeated in 1861 under McDowell, in the spring of 1862 under McClellan on the Peninsula, again under Pope on the second Bull Run field, next under Burnside at Fredericksburg in the fall of 1862, and in 1863 under Hooker at Chancellorsville; and the only success it had achieved in pitched battle was the victory of Antietam. That was a victory only because Lee left the field unassailed after the battle had been fought. Meade was called to the command within three days of the battle of Gettysburg, and was compelled to advance to meet the strongest and most defiant army that ever marched under the Confederate flag, and one that fully equaled his in numbers and that was flushed with repeated triumphs. His army was fresh from the humiliating discomfiture of Chancellorsville, distrustful of its own ability because of distrust in its commanders, and it had to be concentrated by forced marches to meet the shock of battle on Cemetery Hill.

The Gettysburg campaign was in all material respects defensive. The government had little hope of anything more than repelling Lee's advance upon the national

(Photo by Brady, Washington.)

GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE, 1865.

BORDER-LIFE IN WAR-TIMES.

WHILE all sections of the country keenly felt the sad bereavements and sacrifices of the civil war, only those who lived on the border between the two contending sections involved in bloody fraternal strife, with all the fierce passions it inspires, can have any just conception of the severe trials and constant strain which fell upon the border people. My home was then in Chambersburg, in one of the most beautiful valleys of the country, and among a people exceptionally comfortable and forming one of the most delightful communities of the State. The first distant murmurs of the coming war were heard in Chambersburg in October, 1859, when John Brown and his few insane followers attempted the conquest of Virginia by assaulting Harper's Ferry. Although Brown had made Chambersburg his base of operations for some weeks before he moved upon Harper's Ferry, freely mingling with the citizens of the town and known only as "Dr. Smith," who was ostensibly engaged in mining pursuits in Maryland, there was not a single resident of Chambersburg who had any conception or suspicion of his purpose; but when the startling news came that actual conflict had been precipitated at Harper's Ferry by the stubborn fanatic fresh from the Kansas battles, it appalled the community, as it seemed to be the precursor of civil war. In little more than a year thereafter the people of the town were again startled

by Lieutenant Jones and straggling members of his command reaching there, exhausted and footsore, to announce that he had been compelled to abandon Harper's Ferry, where he was in command, and had blown up the works as far as he was able to accomplish it. This was one of the first of the many thrilling events of the great war that was soon to burst upon us. From that time, through four long years of bloody battle until the end came at Appomattox, there was not a day nor an hour of absolute peace in the border counties.

Chambersburg was within a night's ride of the Confederate lines during the whole war, and not only the repeated raids made into that community by the Confederate commanders, but the constant sense of insecurity and the multiplied reports of incursions from the enemy, made tranquility impossible. Not only did these people suffer their full share of the exactions of war which fell upon every community, but they were subject to constant convulsions by actual or threatened raids of the enemy, and often by destructive incursions of militia defenders; and they suffered unspeakable loss of property from both armies. Finally, upon Chambersburg fell the avenging blow for Hunter's vandalism in Virginia, and the beautiful old town was left in its ashes and its people largely impoverished. On the 12th of April, 1861, the brief telegraphic bulletins which were then obtainable in country districts announced the bombardment of Sumter. Business was practically suspended, public meetings were held in support of the government at which the leading men of every political faith were orators, the Stars and Stripes were displayed from every house, and patriotic badges and shields graced almost every person. Volunteering was so rapid that companies could not even be organized to keep pace with them. The first call for troops was responded to more generously in that section

(Photo by Brady, Washington.)

GENERAL J. E. B. STUART, 1862.

Lexington Va
21 Dec 1866

My dear Sir

In reply to your letter of the 15th Inst: I have to state, that should I complete the history I contemplate, the arrangements for its publication are made.

Very respt

R E Lee

Mr Alexr. K McClure

FAC-SIMILE OF LETTER FROM GENERAL LEE.

THE PENNSYLVANIA RESERVE CORPS.

WHILE none will claim that the soldiers of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps were more heroic than other scores of thousands of Pennsylvania soldiers who volunteered for the defence of the Union, it is none the less true that this organization, alike by reason of the peculiar circumstances under which it was created and because of its opportunities for the most heroic service in nearly every battle of the Army of the Potomac, occupies a distinctive place in the history of Pennsylvania heroism. How it was organized has already been stated in these articles. How it was summoned by the patriotism and sagacity of Governor Curtin when the national government had not only not called for it, but refused to accept it; how the legislature was appealed to by the Governor, and a State organization effected alike for the protection of the State and the general government; how it was frantically called for by the same authorities who had rejected it when disaster fell upon the Union forces at Bull Run; how it promptly marched to Washington and ended panic by assuring the safety of the capital,—are matters of history known to all; and when it is remembered that it had such commanders as McCall, Meade, Reynolds, Ord, and Crawford, and brigade commanders who have shed lustre upon the skill and heroism of Pennsylvania soldiers, and that more than one-half of its entire force fell wounded or dead

in battle, it is not surprising that the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps occupies a unique position in the annals of Pennsylvania achievement and sacrifice in our civil war.

The command of the Reserves was first offered to General McClellan, and he had accepted, but on his way to Harrisburg he was stopped at Columbus, Ohio, where he was prevailed upon to accept the command of the Ohio State troops. It was then offered to General Franklin, but he declined, as he had been promoted to a colonelcy in the regular army. It was then tendered to General McCall of Chester county, Pennsylvania, a retired army officer, who proved to be an excellent disciplinarian and a most gallant soldier. General McCall earnestly devoted himself, and at once, to the organization for service of the division, to its drill and discipline, and gave to the Bucktails, or First Rifles, his especial care—a regiment to become famous as skirmishers wholly unique, and whose value in thick woods, tangled overgrowth, streams, and mountain-passes was unequaled anywhere. Three brigades were formed, under Reynolds, Meade, and Ord—names soon to become famous for ability and conspicuous service; and it cannot be questioned that the impression left by these able soldiers of the highest class in their discipline and instruction was long effective and contributed greatly to the reputation of the division.

Before the advance of our lines in front of Washington to a stronger position the Reserves were ordered to Langley, at Camp Pierpoint, beyond the Chain Bridge, where McCall's division constituted the right of the army, which it held until after the seven days' retreat on the Peninsula. Constantly in contact with the enemy, and always with credit to itself, it was preparing for the larger operations of war so soon to devolve upon it. A reconnaissance in force showed the presence of the enemy

(Photo by Gutekunst, Philadelphia.)

MAJOR GENERAL S. W. CRAWFORD, 1865.

APPENDIX.

THE NICOLAY-McCLURE CONTROVERSY.

LINCOLN AND HAMLIN.

[From *The Philadelphia Times*, July 6, 1891.]

THE death of Hannibal Hamlin, one of the few lingering picturesque characters of the political revolution that conquered armed rebellion and effaced slavery, has inspired very free discussion of the early conflicts of Republicanism and of the relations which existed between Lincoln and Hamlin. Hamlin was one of the central figures of the first national Republican battle in 1856; he was the first elected Republican Vice-President; his personal relations with President Lincoln were admittedly of the most agreeable nature; his public record while Vice-President had given no offense to any element of his party; and his then unexpected and now apparently unexplainable defeat for renomination with Lincoln in 1864 has elicited much conflicting discussion.

Looking back over the dark days of civil war, with their often sudden and imperious necessities in field and forum, and in political directions as well, it is often difficult to explain results in accord with the sunnier light of the present; and as yet we have seen no explanation of the rejection of Vice-President Hamlin in 1864 that presents the truth. Most of our contemporaries which have discussed the question have assumed that the defeat of Hamlin was accomplished against the wishes of Lincoln. This point is taken up in the elaborate *Life of Lincoln* by Nicolay and Hay, and they assume to settle it by stating that Mr. Lincoln was accused by members of the Baltimore Convention of preferring a Southern or a new man for Vice-President, and Mr. Nicolay communicated with Lincoln on the subject and reported a denial of Lincoln's purpose to interfere in the contest.

The *Evening Telegraph* of this city, usually accurate in the presentation of political history, states that "it was not the President's (Lincoln's) doings that his trusted and cherished coadjutor was deposed; it was a piece of politics, pure and simple; a mistaken attempt to placate Southern feeling before the time was ripe for it." In the same article it is assumed that "if Mr. Hamlin had been renominated President Lincoln would have lived through his second term," and the motive for Lincoln's assassination is ascribed to "the fact that a Southern man was to succeed as a result of his (Booth's) murderous deed." The theory that Lincoln was murdered to bring a Southern man to the Presidency is clearly refuted by the well-known historical fact that of all men North or South no one was at that time more execrated in the South than Andrew Johnson.

It is true that Hamlin, an entirely unobjectionable Vice-President and a leader with peculiar claims upon the Republican party, was rejected as Vice-President by the Republican Convention of 1864 to place a Southern man in that office, and it is equally true that it would not and could not have been done had President Lincoln opposed it. So far from opposing it, Lincoln discreetly favored it; indeed, earnestly desired it. The writer hereof was a delegate at large from Pennsylvania in the Baltimore Convention of 1864, and in response to an invitation from the President to visit Washington on the eve of the meeting of the body, a conference was had in which Lincoln gravely urged the nomination of Johnson for Vice-President. It was solely in deference to Lincoln's earnest convictions as to the national and international necessities which demanded Johnson's nomination for the Vice-Presidency that the writer's vote was cast against Hamlin, and other Pennsylvania delegates were influenced to the same action by the confidential assurance of Lincoln's wishes.

It should not be assumed that Lincoln was ambitious to play the role of political master or that he was perfidious to any. His position was not only one of the greatest delicacy in politics, but he was loaded with responsibilities to which all former Presidents had been strangers. His one supreme desire was the restoration of the Union, and he would gladly have surrendered his own high honors, and even his life, could he thereby have restored the dissevered States. The one great shadow that hung over him and his power was the sectional character of the ruling party and the government. It weakened his arm to make peace; it strengthened European hostility to the cause of the Union;

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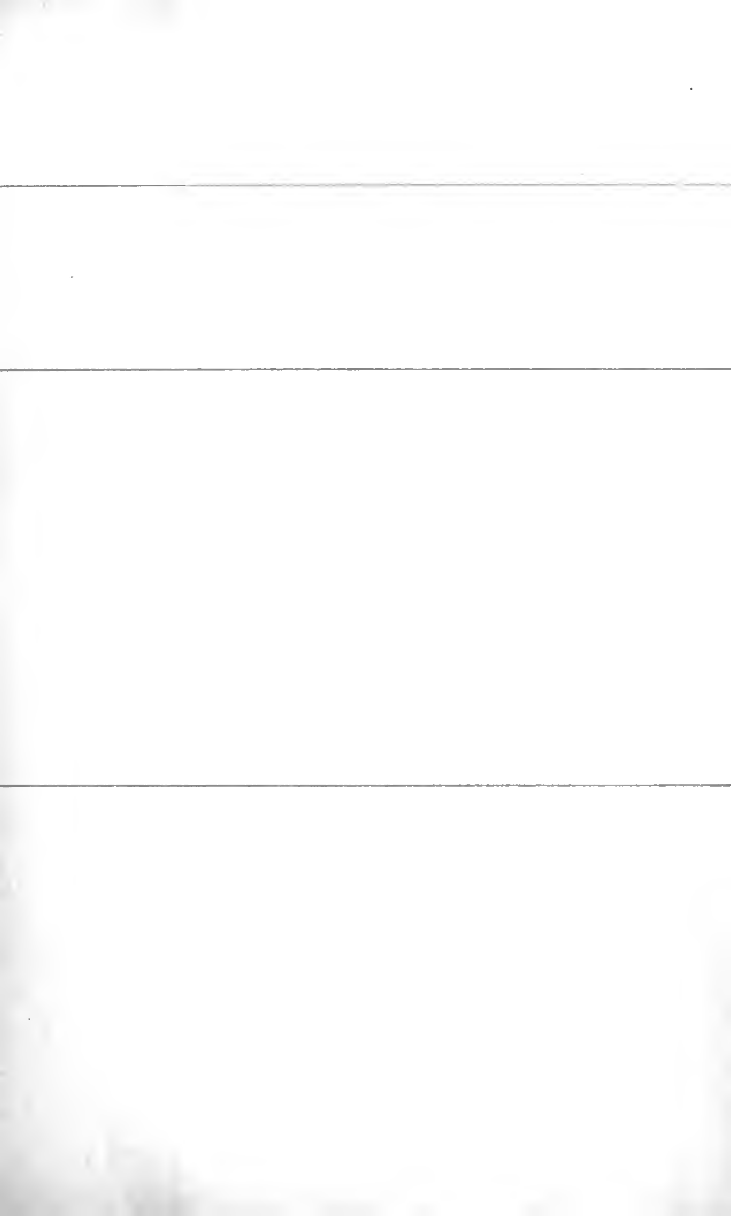

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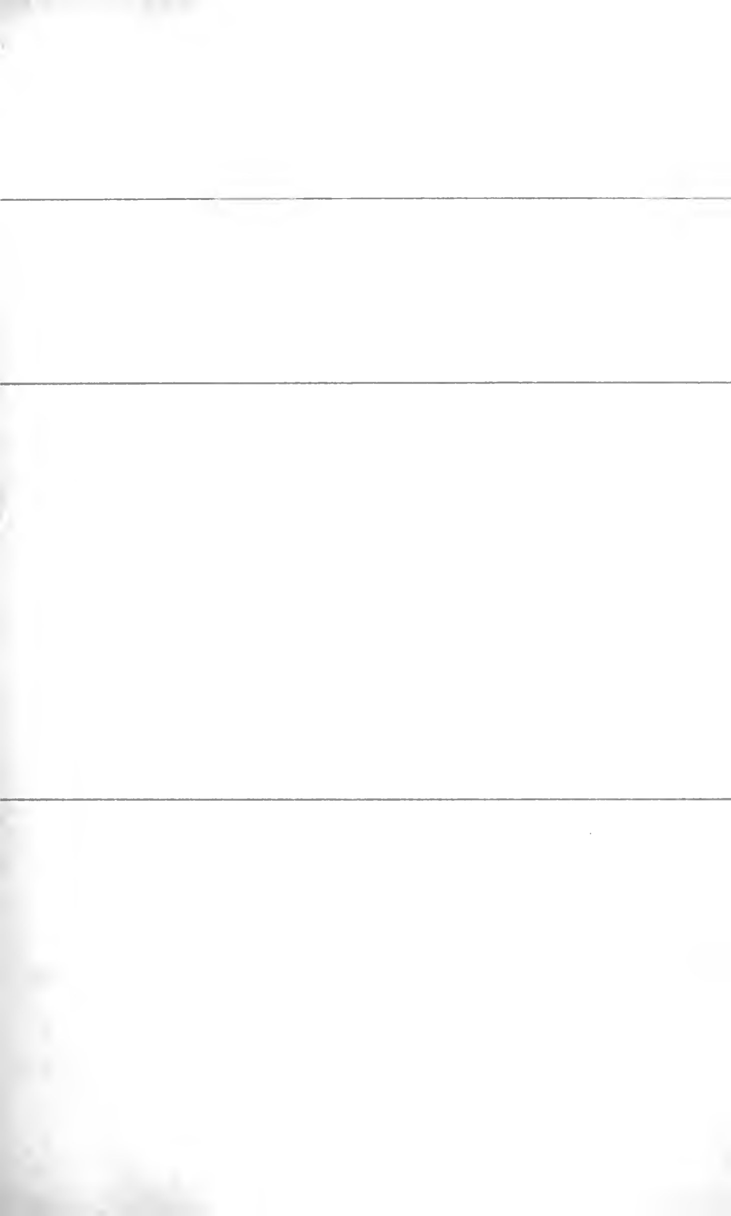

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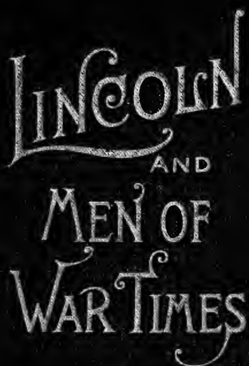
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